

I'll Take the High Road

Bampton Common

Cumbria

Lake District National Park
Authority



AUGUST 2022

Community based survey
and excavation EH187/01

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for Lake District National Park Authority

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Heritage Impact Assessment
Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment
Historic Landscape Survey
Written Scheme of Investigation

Geophysical Survey
Trial Trench Evaluation
Archaeological Excavation
Archaeological Watching Briefs

CONTENTS

Summary.....	4
1 Introduction.....	5
1.1 Project Circumstances.....	5
2 Methodology.....	6
2.1 Scope of the Work.....	6
2.2 Documentary Research.....	6
2.3 Topographic Survey.....	6
2.4 Geophysical Survey.....	7
2.5 Archaeological excavation.....	8
2.6 Project Archive.....	9
3 Desk-based Assessment.....	10
3.1 Location, Topography and Geological Context.....	10
3.2 Archaeological and Historical Background.....	11
3.3 Previous Investigations of the High Street Roman Road.....	17
4 Topographic Survey.....	20
4.1 Introduction.....	20
4.2 Study Area.....	20
4.3 Area A.....	23
4.4 Area B.....	23
4.5 Area C.....	24
5 Geophysical Survey.....	26
5.1 Introduction.....	26
5.2 Area 1.....	26
5.3 Area 2.....	26
6 Archaeological Excavation.....	28
6.1 Introduction.....	28
6.2 Results.....	29
6.3 Discussion.....	31
7 Conclusions.....	32
7.1 High Street Roman Road.....	32
1.2 Archaeological potential.....	33
Bibliography.....	34
APPENDIX 1: Gazetteer.....	36

APPENDIX 2: Figures43

FIGURES

Figure 1: Site location

Figure 2: Location of the study area showing High Street Roman Road (scheduled area) and nearby prehistoric sites

Figure 3: Extracts from the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1863 (6 inch to one mile) showing the course of High Street Roman Road

Figure 4: Extract from the 1897 Ordnance Survey map (1 inch to 1 mile scale).

Figure 5: Extracts from the 1956 Ordnance Survey map (1:10,560 scale)

Figure 6: Study area showing topography and locations of LiDAR figures

Figure 7: Extracts from 1m LiDAR Data

Figure 8: Study area showing locations of the topographic surveys (Areas A-C) and geophysical surveys (Area 1 & Area 2)

Figure 9: Topographic survey of Area A showing earthworks

Figure 10: Topographic survey of Area B showing breaks in the slope on Loadpot Hill.

Figure 11: Topographic survey of Area C showing earthworks associated with High Street

Figure 12: Geophysical survey of Area 1

Figure 13: Geophysical interpretation of Area 1

Figure 14: Archaeological interpretation of Area 1 showing earthworks and the location of Trench 1

Figure 15: Geophysical survey of Area 2

Figure 16: Geophysical interpretation of Area 2

Figure 17: Archaeological interpretation of Area 2 showing earthworks and the location of Trench 2

Figure 18: Plan and section of Trench 1.

PLATES

Plate 1: RCHME plan of the Roman roads in Cumbria

Plate 2: Extract from Jeffreys' The County of Westmorland, 1770

Plate 3: Extract from Hodgon's Plan of the County of Westmorland, 1828

Plate 4: Topographic map of Ullswater and Haweswater, showing the High Street Roman Road crossing land over 200ft (Geographical Journal, 1895)

Plate 5: Loadpot Hill showing modern footpaths, looking northwest.

Plate 6: Modern path south of Loadpot Hill showing possible steps in the slope, looking northeast

Plate 7: Earthwork bank crossing the modern path south of Loadpot Hill, looking north

Plate 8: Wether Hill from Loadpot Hill showing the possible route of High Street Roman Road as a cutting in the peat, looking southeast

Plate 9: Straight section of the route on Wether Hill defined by a hollow way, looking south

Plate 10: A section of path on Wether Hill with stone visible at the surface, looking north

Plate 11: Hollow way on the north side of Wether Hill, looking north

Plate 12: Trench 1 at Wether Hill following excavation, looking southeast

Plate 13: Trench 2 south of Loadpot Hill following excavation, looking southeast

Plate 14: Bank and gully in the east end of Trench 1 prior to excavation, looking east

Plate 15: Excavated features in the east end of Trench 1, looking south

Plate 16: Embanked deposit (109) in the west end of Trench 1, looking east

Summary

In 2022 Eden Heritage Ltd was commissioned by the Lake District National Park Authority to facilitate a community-based survey and excavation of the possible High Street Roman Road on land at Bampton Common, Cumbria, known as 'I'll Take the High Road' (centred at National Grid Reference NY 4564 1732).

The High Street Roman Road (HER 1522) stretches from Brougham Roman Fort to the south of Penrith, over the Lake District Fells to Ambleside Roman Fort. Of this route 17 km in the Lake District National Park is designated a scheduled monument (List Entry Number 1003275) and 5 km of this crosses Bampton Common. However, the form and route of High Street Roman Road where it crosses Bampton Common has been the cause of much speculation. Recent studies by Historic England have failed to identify evidence for the road.

The High Street Roman Road appears to have been known and written about from at least the medieval period onwards and antiquarians have long speculated about the presence of the Roman road, including Cornelius Nicholson who recorded in *The Annals of Kendal* (1861) that he 'laid bare the Roman pavement in two or three places'. However, it is unknown whether the High Street was constructed by the Romans in the form of the 'classic' Roman road, or whether a pre-existing mountain track was adapted by the Romans.

The current project comprised a programme of archaeological survey and investigation undertaken by the project volunteers over a c.2km section of the route of the High Street Roman Road between Loadpot Hill and Wether Hill to the south. Topographic survey, geophysical survey and excavation on Wether Hill recorded the presence of an embanked trackway and a hollow way with associated drainage features. The presence of High Street Roman Road could not be determined to the north of Wether Hill or on the southern slopes of Loadpot Hill where the recorded route traverses an area of deep peat and rough vegetation.

No archaeological evidence was recovered to date the excavated features, which were not typical of a 'classic' Roman road. It was considered that the evidence points to the presence of a trackway which may have been utilised in the Roman period, and which may have varied considerably over the course of the route depending on local conditions. Further excavations of full sections across the High Street Roman Road would be required to confirm the exact location and makeup of the road where it crosses Bampton Common.

1 Introduction

1.1 Project Circumstances

- 1.1.1 Eden Heritage Ltd was commissioned by the Lake District National Park Authority to facilitate a community-based survey and excavation of the possible High Street Roman Road on land at Bampton Common, Cumbria (centred at National Grid Reference NY 4564 1732; Figure 1). The archaeology project, known as 'I'll Take the High Road', formed part of 'Our Common Cause: Our Upland Commons', a National Lottery Funded project which aims to conserve, enhance and broaden understanding of the cultural and natural heritage of commons and commoning in upland England.
- 1.1.2 The High Street Roman Road (HER 1522) stretches from Brougham Roman Fort to the south of Penrith, over the Lake District Fells to Ambleside Roman Fort. Of this route 17 km in the Lake District National Park is designated a scheduled monument (List Entry Number 1003275) and 5 km of this crosses Bampton Common. The road reaches elevations of c.820m (2,690ft) in the Lake District Fells.
- 1.1.3 In 2006 three trenches were excavated on the presumed route of the Roman Road between Froswick and Thornthwaite Crag, which forms part of the Kentmere Horseshoe, one of the longest walks in the Lake District. The trenches revealed the presence of a graveled surface and features which were believed to be associated with the prevention of flooding, or to stop the encroachment of peat onto the road surface (Greenlane Archaeology 2006). Although no dating evidence was recovered, it was concluded that the design and construction of the road indicated that it was likely of Roman origin.
- 1.1.4 Historic England were also engaged in a project combining aerial photography, interpretation and mapping, and ground-based observation to produce a detailed survey of the route, assessing its interpretation as a Roman road and providing an up-to-date audit of its condition to support management and a scheduling review. The current project was designed by the Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA) to validate the results of these surveys in the field, using geophysical survey and small-scale excavations to try to confirm the route and location of the High Street Roman Road.
- 1.1.5 This report presents the results of the programme of topographic survey, geophysical survey and excavation undertaken by the project volunteers over c.2km of the route of the High Street Roman Road. In accordance with the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 the work was undertaken under a section 42 license (Historic England reference AA/012004) and scheduled monument consent (Historic England reference S00243040) which were granted by Historic England.

2 Methodology

2.1 Scope of the Work

2.1.1 The project consisted of a preliminary desk-based assessment, to collate what is already known about the High Street Roman Road, followed by community based topographic and geophysical surveys of the route. This work informed the locations of small-scale archaeological excavations, which aimed to determine the extent and character of the archaeological remains identified by topographic and geophysical surveys, in accordance with the project brief (LDNPA 2022).

2.2 Documentary Research

2.2.1 The preliminary desk-based assessment was undertaken utilising readily-available documentary and cartographic resources (detailed investigation of primary sources was outside the scope of the current project). The primary and secondary sources used within this report were derived mainly from the Lake District Historic Environment Record (HER) and the online sources which were also consulted, including the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) and the National Heritage List (NHL) maintained by Historic England. The project study area is depicted on Figure 2.

2.2.2 Several published and unpublished sources were also consulted for information of the study area including the Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society (CWAAS), as well as various resources held by Eden Heritage Ltd.

2.2.3 All work undertaken was consistent with the relevant standards and procedures of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, as set out in *Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment* (CIfA 2020a).

2.3 Topographic Survey

2.3.1 The site and its environs were visited on the 1st July 2022 in order to identify the presumed route of the High Street Roman Road, and to access ground conditions and access. The topographic survey was subsequently undertaken by volunteers under the supervision of Eden Heritage Ltd and LDNPA staff. The survey was designed to be undertaken using inexpensive and accessible equipment.

2.3.2 Topographical survey was undertaken to record visible earthworks and structures identified on the route of the High Street Roman Road. This comprised a metric survey of all visible features, including all earthwork banks, ditches, trackways, quarries and ponds, as well as other upstanding remains, such as relict stone walls and buildings. The objective of the survey was to provide an accurate record in plan of the archaeological features present, in relation to presumed route of the Roman road.

2.3.3 The topographic survey corresponded to a Level 3 survey as described by Historic England in

Understanding the Archaeology of Historic Landscapes: A Guide to Good Recording Practice (Historic England 2017). The survey was undertaken using baseline and offset measurements with tapes. This method involved establishing a series of 50m baseline survey stations along the route of the possible Roman road, which were then used to take direct measurements of topographic features. This information was drawn onto the permatrace sheets in the field and enhanced with hachures.

- 2.3.4 Detailed survey of all elements within the survey area was undertaken at 1:200 scale, which was practical in terms of the equipment being used and was considered appropriate in order to show earthwork detail clearly and accurately. Ground control was provided using a hand-held GPS. All co-ordinates and levels were presented as easting, northing and height; the co-ordinates expressed as Ordnance Survey National Grid (OSNG), and heights as Ordnance Survey height datum. The survey drawings were subsequently digitised using AutoCAD in order to provide survey plans at 1:500 scale.
- 2.3.5 Photographs were taken of upstanding features using digital photography. Photograph numbers and directions were recorded on pro-forma field record sheets. Digital photographs were downloaded onto a laptop for storage at the end of each day, and a selection also used in the project report.
- 2.3.6 Topographic survey was undertaken over three defined areas where possible earthworks were identified (Figure 8). These were located to the south of Loadpot Hill (Area A and Area B) and on the summit of Wether Hill (Area C). Area A measured 50m by 50m and Area B was 50m by 30m. Area C covered an area measuring 100m by 30m. The topographical surveys were supplemented with a written description of the earthworks present; these were used to inform the final project report.

2.4 Geophysical Survey

- 2.4.1 Geophysical survey was undertaken to help determine the potential for sub-surface archaeological remains and to inform the subsequent excavations. The geophysical survey fieldwork and reporting was undertaken following Historic England guidelines (English Heritage 2008) and in accordance with the standard and guidance of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2020b).
- 2.4.2 Earth resistance survey was selected as the most appropriate technique, given the presence of igneous geology (sandstone), and the expected presence of archaeological features at depths of no more than c.1m. Earth resistance survey is also an appropriate technique for determining the presence/absence of stone deposits/structures and soil-filled features such as ditches and pits.
- 2.4.3 The geophysical survey areas measured c.0.6ha in total, comprising two areas located on the route of the High Street Roman Road (Figure 8). A 20m grid was established across each area and tied-in to the topographic surveys (Area 1 and Area 2). Area 1 measured 120m by 40m on the summit of Wether Hill and Area 2 measured 66m by 20m located on the southern slope of Loadpot Hill.
- 2.4.4 Earth resistance measurements were determined using a Geoscan RM15 resistance meter, with twin probes set 0.5m apart. The survey was undertaken using a zig-zag traverse scheme, with data being

logged in 20m grid units. A sample interval of 0.5m was used, with a traverse interval of 1m, providing 800 sample measurements per grid unit, with measurements being recorded at the centre of each grid cell. Data were downloaded on site into a laptop computer for storage and processing.

2.4.5 Geophysical survey data were processed using Snuffler software, which was used to produce 'grey-scale' images of the raw data. High resistance anomalies are displayed as light grey, and low resistance anomalies are displayed as dark grey. Resistance values were measured in Ohms.

2.4.6 Raw data were processed in order to attempt to further define and highlight the archaeological features detected. The following basic data processing functions were used:

- *Despike*: to compensate for data collection errors due to poor contact and the resulting erroneous data spikes (despike was performed on all survey grids);
- *Clip*: to clip data to specified maximum and minimum values, in order to highlight the range of values in the geophysical data; the data displayed for Area 1 was clipped between 400 to 640 Ohms and the data for Area 2 was clipped between 450 to 690 Ohms.
- *Interpolate*: to increase or match the resolution of the sample intervals in the x and y directions.

2.4.7 Two types of geophysical anomaly were detected in the gradiometer data:

- *High resistance*: regions of anomalously high resistance, which may be associated with the presence of low-moisture deposits/compacted surfaces and stone deposits/ foundations or sub-surface voids;
- *Low Resistance*: regions of anomalously low resistance, which may be associated with features with a high moisture content, such as ditches or pits, land-drains or other highly conductive materials;

2.4.8 The grey-scale images were combined with site survey data and Ordnance Survey data to produce the geophysical survey figures. Geophysical survey interpretation diagrams show the location and extent of areas of high and low resistance. Archaeological interpretation diagrams are also provided, which are based on the interpretation of the results in light of the topographic surveys.

2.5 Archaeological excavation

2.5.1 Excavation was undertaken in order to provide information regarding the potential for buried archaeological remains on the route of the possible Roman road. The purpose of the excavation work was to obtain information on the date, quality, depth and state of preservation of potential archaeological remains, if present. The excavation work was undertaken following the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation (2020c).

2.5.2 In accordance with the scheduled monument consent the work comprised the excavation of up to two trenches measuring approximately 5m long by 1.6m wide within the scheduled area. These were

combined into a single trench measuring 10m long by 1.5m wide at Wether Hill (Trench 1) to target the results of the geophysical survey in Area 1. In addition, one trench, measuring 5m long by 1.5m wide (Trench 2), was excavated on the southern slope of Loadpot Hill outside of the scheduled area in Area 2 to target geophysical anomalies (Figure 8). The general aims of these investigations were:

- to establish the presence/absence, nature, extent and state of preservation of archaeological remains and to record these where they were observed;
- to establish the character of those features in terms of cuts, soil matrices and interfaces;
- to assess the impact of the application on the archaeological site;
- to recover artefactual material, especially that useful for dating purposes;
- to recover palaeoenvironmental material where it survives in order to understand site and landscape formation processes.

2.5.3 Turf and peat were removed by hand to expose the potential archaeological features. The trial trenches were subsequently cleaned by hand. All possible features were inspected, and deposits were excavated by hand to retrieve artefactual material. Once completed all features were recorded in accordance with the Museum of London Archaeological Service Archaeological Site Manual (Museum of London 1994). No artefacts or samples were recovered from either of the trenches.

2.5.4 The evaluation trenches were backfilled with the excavated material following the field evaluation.

2.5.5 The fieldwork programme was followed by an assessment of the data as set out in the *Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (CIfA 2020c) and the *Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (CIfA 2020d).

2.6 Project Archive

2.6.1 A full professional archive has been compiled in accordance the Archaeological Archives Forum recommendations (Brown 2011). The data archive for the geophysical survey has been created in following the recommendations of the Archaeology Data Service (ADS 2013).

2.6.2 A PDF version of the final report will be deposited with the Lake District Historic Environment Record within 3 months of completion of the project. Copies will also be provided to Historic England.

2.6.3 Eden Heritage Ltd supports the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) project. This project aims to provide an online index and access to the extensive and expanding body of grey literature created as a result of archaeological fieldwork. Details of this study will be made available by Eden Heritage Ltd and a copy of the report will be uploaded to the OASIS website within 3 months following approval by the Lake District Historic National Park Authority.

3 Desk-based Assessment

3.1 Location, Topography and Geological Context

- 3.1.1 Bampton Common is a 25.8km² common situated approximately 13km to the southwest of Penrith and c.5km to the southwest of the village of Bampton, in part of Cumbria that was formerly known as Westmorland (Figure 1). The common lies above and to the west of Haweswater Reservoir and is southeast of Lake Ullswater in the eastern portion of the Lake District National Park.
- 3.1.2 Bampton Common comprises unenclosed fell land, with large expanses of blanket bog on the flat tops of the common. Elevations at Bampton Common range from 200m to 802m above sea level. The geology of the area is complex, but mainly comprises the Borrowdale Volcanic Series, which is a group of igneous rock formations named after the Borrowdale area of the Lake District. These formed approximately 449 to 458 million years ago in the Ordovician Period. The igneous bedrock of the area is overlain by glacial deposits of clay, silt, sand and gravel which formed up to 3 million years ago in the Quaternary Period (BGS 2022). As noted above, large areas are also covered by peat.
- 3.1.3 The High Street Roman Road has become one of the best-known Roman roads in Cumbria and the route where it passes over Bampton Common has been the cause of much speculation. From the Roman fort at Brougham the assumed route of the Roman road is now hidden by modern roads and fields as far as Tirril, from where the route crosses several fields running south towards Winder Hall Farm, which was located midway between Pooley Bridge and Askham. From Winder Hall the route leads onto the open fell and is marked by an indistinct track. This track maintains its height along the slopes of Heughscar before falling steeply to cross a track leading down to Pooley Bridge, then rising up to pass the Elder Beck to reach the Cockpit Stone Circle (Southworth 1985, 99). The route passes to the west of the stone circle crossing higher ground to the east side of Aik Beck, and skirts Arthur's Pike, and a well-defined (sometimes sunken) track follows rising ground to Loadpot Hill (Figure 1).
- 3.1.4 From here the route skirts the summit of Loadpot Hill and the marked route of the Roman road follows the western boundary of Bampton Common over the twin mounds of Wether Hill reaching over 2,000 feet (Figure 2). The route then passes the top of Keasgill Head, and between two small tarns at Redcrag, then follows the top of a narrow ridge to High Raise and Rampsgill Head. The Riggingdale Beck marks the southern boundary of Bampton Common at this location on the route.
- 3.1.5 From here the route leads due south across the mountain named High Street (sometimes named Racehorse Hill), passing Thornthwaite Crag and down the Troutbeck valley. According to Margary the Roman road follows the route down the eastern side of the beck to the entrance of the valley and from there joins the main Ambleside to Windermere Road (Southworth 1985, 111).
-

3.2 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 3.2.1 This historical and archaeological background is compiled from sources consulted during the desk-based research. It is intended only as a summary of historical developments within and around Bampton Common. Archaeological sites recorded in the Lake District Historic Environment Record (HER) and Historic England's National Heritage List (NHL), are referenced where known.
- 3.2.2 The following chronological dates are based on Historic England's Period List. The date ranges have been provided to assist with the identification of archaeological and cultural periods, however these dates should not be taken as definitive or absolute, as time periods vary depending on geographical focus and archaeological science disciplines (FISH 2022).
- 3.2.3 ***Prehistoric (up to c. AD43):*** the earliest evidence for human hunter-gatherer activity in Cumbria dates to the Late Upper Palaeolithic c.16,000-10,000BC, although evidence for occupation in this period is rare. The evidence for the first post-glacial activity in Cumbria comes from sites around Morecambe Bay, indicating hunting was taking place in the area. Evidence for Mesolithic activity (c.10,000-4,000BC) is more frequent, scatters of lithic material providing the main evidence for occupation in this period, with few organic or structural remains having been identified in Cumbria (Brennand 2006, 25). Palaeoenvironmental evidence suggests that this activity was widespread in the county. However, there are no Mesolithic sites recorded at Bampton Common.
- 3.2.4 The transition from the Mesolithic to Neolithic (4,000-2,200BC) was a gradual process in Cumbria and characterized by new lithic tool types and the introduction of pottery. Neolithic settlement sites remain elusive in Cumbria, in contrast to the presence of important Neolithic monuments, which make up the majority of the archaeological record for this period.
- 3.2.5 The domination of the landscape by monuments in the Neolithic and Early Bronze Age seems to have been succeeded by a pattern of field systems and permanent settlements (Thomas 1991, 34). Little is known about Bronze Age (2,600-700BC) settlement but there is an abundance of evidence in Cumbria for land use during this period in the form of cairn fields, which are associated with field clearance and the improvement of land for grazing or cultivation (Brennand 2006, 34). It has been suggested that there was a notable expansion of settlement in the Middle and Late Bronze Age into the upland areas of the Lake District (Rollinson 1967, 24).
- 3.2.6 There is a complex of prehistoric monuments at Moor Divock and Askham Fell consisting of the Cockpit Stone Circle, a series of prehistoric burial cairns, standing stones and aligned monuments, which suggests the area was a focus of ceremonial activity and burial in the Bronze Age. The Cockpit Stone Circle (NHL 1007367) is situated immediately adjacent to the route of the High Street Roman Road on Moor Divock, on a slight rise in the landscape, and close to a natural ford crossing point of Elder Beck. Seven clearance cairns lay adjacent and to the north of the stone circle. Evidence of Early

Bronze Age burial has also been identified at Moor Divock including cremations and a covered crouched inhumation buried in a cist at White Raise cairn (Barrowclough 2010, 164).

- 3.2.7 There is a further small stone circle on Swarth Fell (NHL 1007357), located immediately to the west of the High Street Roman Road (see Figure 2). The monument situated in an isolated location in a natural hollow close to the head of Swarth Beck and includes a slightly oval arrangement of approximately 81 fallen stones with an external diameter of 20m by 17m. A round cairn is also located at High Raise (NHL 1011590) on Bampton Common which is likely Bronze Age. The monument includes a flat-topped oval mound of stones up to 0.8m high with maximum dimensions of 9m by 8m. There is a modern walkers' cairn on the northern edge of the cairn. Both are scheduled.
- 3.2.8 A round cairn is recorded at Loadpot Hill in the Lake District Historic Environment Record (HER 31189) which may be Bronze Age in date. The cairn measures approximately 10m in diameter and stands up to 1.50m above the surrounding land, being turf covered. A possible prehistoric clearance cairn has also been recorded to the northeast (HER 31164), marked with a later (medieval?) boundary stone. Both monuments lie just outside of Bampton Common, about 100m to the north of the boundary.
- 3.2.9 Castle Crag (NHL 1007411) located to the west of Hawswater Reservoir is a slight univallate hillfort located on the top of Castle Crag on Bampton Common, a projection of rock extending north-east from Birks Crag. Slight univallate hillforts are defined as enclosures situated on or close to hilltops and defined by a single line of earthworks, and are generally regarded as dating between the Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age (Historic England 2022). Limited archaeological excavation revealed the existence of living floors within the main enclosure and use of the outer enclosure (RCHME 1936).
- 3.2.10 Native farming settlements which may date to the Iron Age (c.800B-c.AD 43) and/or the Romano-British period can be found to the north of the study area. On the east-facing slopes of Skirsgill Hill is a Romano-British enclosed stone hut circle settlement, a smaller Romano-British farmstead, and a Romano-British regular aggregate field system (NHL 1007414). A Romano-British enclosed stone hut circle settlement is also recorded at Heck Beck to the west of Bampton Common (NHL 1011360).
- 3.2.11 Three hut circles, measuring between 4m and 6m in diameter are recorded 1km to the west of the High Street Roman Road in the Lake District Historic Environment Record at Ramps Gill (HER 6954). An undated enclosure is also recorded at Wether Hill immediately to the west of the route (HER 31194). The enclosure is recorded as comprising a low annular bank measuring 7m in diameter located c.30m west of High Street on the north facing slope of Wether Hill, with a break in the bank denoting a possible entrance.
- 3.2.12 The presence of monuments on the course of the High Street could indicate an earlier routeway.
- 3.2.13 **Romano-British Period (c.AD 43 to c. 410):** it is believed that the Roman conquest of the North West was launched from bases in the North West Midlands to Lancaster in the early AD 70s. From there the Lune and Eden valleys provided a route of access to Carlisle. A series of timber forts appear to

have been founded as part of the first advance into the North West, initially of turf and timber construction (Brennand 2006, 63). Subsequent consolidation of the military occupation was under Agricola's governorship (AD c.78-84). Early Flavian sites in Cumbria include Brougham(?) and Carlisle.

3.2.14 The High Street Roman Road (Margary 74) is believed to run from Brougham Roman Fort (*Brocavum*) near Penrith, over the Lake District Fells to Ambleside Roman Fort (*Galava*). This mountain-road climbed on to the fells southwest of Brougham, over the High Fells south of Ullswater and descended to the valley of the Troutbeck, some c.4km southeast of Ambleside. From there the road is believed to have joined an unverified Roman road from Ambleside to Watercrock near Kendal (Margary 70f). It is assumed the forts at Ambleside and Watercrock were established during the consolidation of the North West between c. AD 90 to 130, therefore the High Street Roman Road is likely to have been in use at the same time during the late 1st to early 2nd century AD (Shotter 1997, 34).

3.2.15 The route of the presumed High Street Roman Road was recorded by the RCHME in their inventory for Westmorland (Plate 1). This report states '*From the north it leaves the present main road at Tirril, 2½ miles S.W. of Brougham, and ascends to Burton Fell, whence it passes Loadpot Hill, Whether Hill and High Raise, and reaches the height of 2,600 ft. on High Street Fell. Its course is more circuitous than that of the normal Roman road, but rarely more so than the difficult condition of the ground dictates*' (RCHME 1936, xliii). The presence of metalling was also recorded as having been seen.



Plate 1: RCHME plan of the Roman roads in Cumbria

3.2.16 In the Roman period the roads provided advantages for civilians as well as soldiers, and the military arterial routes became central features for a growing network of roads, which served local farmers

and other industries which were engaging with the Roman economy (Shotter 1997, 69). Civilian settlements developed along these routes to take advantage of the connections to Roman markets.

- 3.2.17 **Early Medieval (AD c. 410-1066):** throughout Cumbria evidence for early medieval activity is very limited and place names provide the main evidence for Anglian and Scandinavian settlement before the Norman Conquest. The place name Bampton, the early form being Bamton (1201) is believed to derive from Old English 'beam' and 'tun' meaning beam farm or farm made with a beam of wood. This language was spoken by Anglo-Saxons from the 6th to the 12th centuries (Lee 1998, 5).
- 3.2.18 **Medieval (AD 1066-1485):** Bampton is situated in Bampton Parish, which contained the manors of Bampton Patrick and Bampton Cundale, names after their respective owners in the early 13th century, Patrick de Culwin (later Curwin) and Henry de Cudale (Winchester 2017, 41). Bampton Patrick passed to the Warwick Family and Bampton Cundale passed to the Cliburns, both eventually being held by the earls of Lonsdale, who became the dominant landowners. The parish contains 4,421ha of unenclosed fell land on Bampton Common (Ibid., 40).
- 3.2.19 The origin of the Bampton Common most likely lies in the medieval period when farmland (plots of arable land, meadow and enclosed pasture) which had exclusive rights for at least part of the year, were separated from the unenclosed moorland and fell over which there were common rights. The boundary between farmland and waste was the 'ring-garth' or 'head-dyke' which was the line between which seasonal movement of stock took place (Winchester 1987, 59).
- 3.2.20 **Post Medieval (AD 1485-1901):** Bampton was a small farming village in the post-medieval period. Thornthwaite Hall at Bampton was built probably in the second half of the 16th century when it belonged to the Curwen family (RCHME 1936). Grange Farm is believed to be 17th century, with additions in 1703 (NHL 1145257). The Parish Church was built in 1726-28 on the site of a medieval church and restored 1804 (NHL 1145258). The economy of the area was predominantly hill farming with some small limestone quarries and lime burning in the 19th century (Winchester 2017, 41).
- 3.2.21 County maps of Westmorland are the earliest readily available maps to show Bampton in this period. Although at a small scale Thomas Jeffreys' 1770 map of The County of Westmorland shows the village of Bampton and Bampton Grange on the west bank of the River Lowther. Bampton Common is not named but Martindale Common is annotated as Martin Dale Forest. The High Street Roman Road is not shown on this map, but the area to the north of Troutbeck Park is annotated 'High Street' in the vicinity of Racecourse Hill (Plate 2). This area is located c.1km to the south of Bampton Common. Similarly Greenwood's 1824 Map of the County of Westmorland annotates the area to the southwest of Bampton Common with 'High Street' suggesting the route passed west of Hawswater Reservoir.
- 3.2.22 The earliest map consulted to show the High Street Roman Road is Thomas Hodgson's 1828 Plan of the County of Westmorland (Plate 3). This shows the High Street as a dashed line, running from Kentmere Park in the south, northwards as far as Bampton Fell and Red Crag. The route is labelled
-

'Roman Road named High Street'. This map also annotates 'Sandford Stake' on Loadpot Hill.



Plate 2: Extract from Jeffreys' The County of Westmorland, 1770

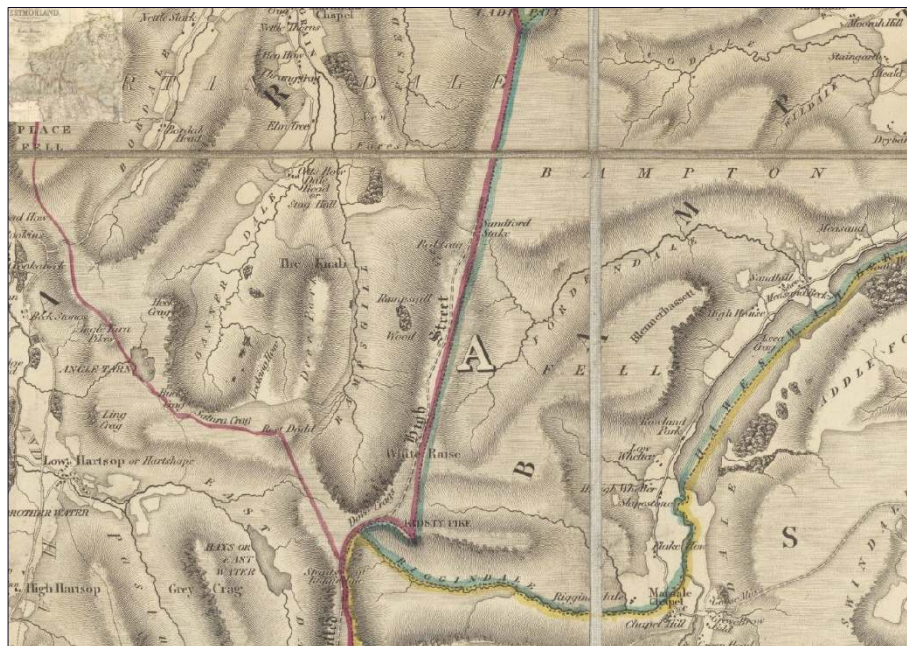


Plate 3: Extract from Hodgson's Plan of the County of Westmorland, 1828

3.2.23 The First Edition 6" to one-mile Ordnance Survey map of 1863 shows the route of the High Street Roman Road in more detail (Figure 3a and Figure 3b). This depicts the route as two dotted parallel lines continuing north of Red Crag across Bampton Common, over Wether Hill (Figure 3a) and skirting to the west of Loadpot Hill, before turning sharply to the northeast crossing Swarth Fell (Figure 3b).

The same symbols are used to depict other minor trackways crossing Bampton Common, although these are narrower, possibly suggesting High Street was a more significant feature in the landscape. The map also shows a rectangular structure to the south of Loadpot Hill, which is named Sandford Stake (Figure 3b). On later mapping this is annotated Lowther House (see Figure 5b). No extant building survives but there is a stone platform and a stone shelter at this location (see Appendix 1).

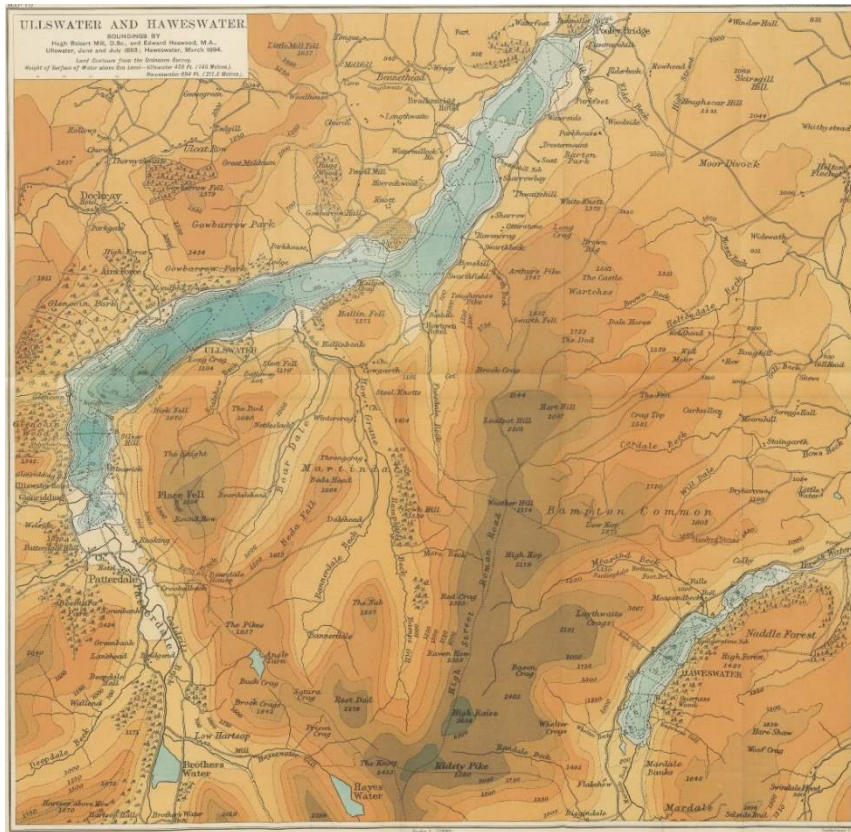


Plate 4: Topographic map of Ullswater and Haweswater, showing the High Street Roman Road crossing land over 200ft (shaded in brown) (Geographical Journal, 1895)

- 3.2.24 Late 19th century Ordnance Survey maps depict the same route for the High Street, which took a dramatic route over the fells reaching over 200ft (see Figure 4 and Plate 4). It was also noted in the late 19th century that the High Street had been used as a packhorse trail (Ferguson 1877, 65). The route across the fells was frequented by peat-carriers taking peat down to Windermere before the arrival of the railways made this activity redundant (Haverfield 1898, 362).
- 3.2.25 The Lake District Historic Environment Record contains a number of features which are related to post-medieval farming practices, including a rectangular field or enclosure for cattle at Whelter Bottom (HER 6628) with an adjacent two-roomed house or hut (HER 6627). Another example is recorded at Atkinson's Grain to the north (HER 21226). A sheep fold (HER 31228) is recorded approximately 1.2km to the east of Loadpot Hill, with a further example to the south at Sealhole Grain (HER 31215). These seem to be located on the lower ground close to water sources.

- 3.2.26 **Modern (AD 1901-Present):** Manchester Corporation took possession of a major part of Bampton Parish in the 1920s (purchasing 2,428ha of common land) to secure land for Haweswater Reservoir and its catchment, which now lies to the east of Bampton Common (Winchester 2017, 41).
- 3.2.27 20th Century Ordnance Survey maps show no significant changes to the route of the High Street Roman Road where it crosses Bampton Common (Figure 5a and Figure 5b). The route is depicted as parallel dashed lines which are typical of a trackway. Lowther House is depicted on this map alongside a chimney. The 1956 map shows the presence of an 'Old Quarry' at Lords Seat and sheepfolds either side of the route attesting to the grazing of sheep on the common (Figure 5b).

3.3 Previous Investigations of the High Street Roman Road

- 3.3.1 The High Street Roman Road appears to have been known and written about from at least the medieval period onwards. Known as High Street, the possible Roman road was also called the Streete in 1650 and in earlier times Brethstrette, Brestrett, magnam viam que venit de Brethstrede (1220-47) and Bredestrete (1256), which probably means 'paved way of the Britons' (Smith 1967, 21).
- 3.3.2 Antiquarians have long speculated about the presence of the Roman road, including Cornelius Nicholson who recorded in *The Annals of Kendal* that he 'laid bare the Roman pavement in two or three places, a foot beneath the turf that now covers it' (Nicholson 1861, 7). It is unknown whether the High Street was created by the Romans, or if a pre-existing mountain track was adapted by the Romans to serve as the road. Writing in 1884, Wilson described the construction of the High Street Roman Road as being 'formed in a very durable and substantial manner, it is raised above the ordinary level of the surrounding ground; it has been paved, channelled, and thoroughly drained, and has been dry and hard, and available for a rapid heavy traffic in all weathers. The width is uniform throughout, except in one or two places where it descends rapidly round a curve and then it widens, so as to make the ascent or descent easier and safer for laden vehicles' (Wilson 1884, 95).
- 3.3.3 The 'classic' Roman road in Britain has two small outer ditches, marking the area which was cleared of vegetation, and two large drainage ditches located either side of the central mound (the *agger*) upon which a metalled surface is constructed (Davies 2011). However, it is evident that roads can become altered by heavy use, may be subject to several phases of re-construction and may also suffer from erosion. The foundation layers and the metalling of the road can also vary considerably depending on local conditions and materials. Kerb stones are sometimes used to help keep the metalling in place and counter the effects of erosion and traffic but only 7% of sites have them (Ibid.)
- 3.3.4 The earliest known archaeological investigation was carried out in 1898, when Dr. G. B. Grundy and Mr. W. H. Parkin cut two sections across the High Street route to the north of Loadpot Hill and near Elder Beck to the northwest of Bampton Common (Haverfield 1899, 361). The trench at Loadpot Hill was placed across a straight embankment, measuring about 10 ft (3m). wide at top, and 15–16 ft

(4.5-4.9m) wide at base. When trenched, it was found to consist of four layers, with turf overlying a layer of angular gravel measuring 9 inches (230mm) thick on the crown of the road but tapering at the sides, beneath which was a layer of peat, 8 inches (200mm) thick, and lastly a layer of larger stones more than two feet (600mm) thick. This was interpreted as the foundation, which was coated with peat and the gravel of the road. No trace of curbstones was identified (Ibid. 362). The second trench was 3.2km to the north to the south of the Elder Beck. Here curbstones were visible on the surface, but the road surface was worn by packhorses and its exact construction could not be determined. Quarried stones were identified at both locations, which along with the metaling for the road were likely to have been quarried nearby. In 1929 Prof. R G Collingwood also investigated an uncertain portion of the route where it descended into Troutbeck. At Hag Gill he observed 'the remains of the metal and bottoming, about 8 ft. wide' at one or two places (Collingwood 1930, 118).

- 3.3.5 Parts of High Street Roman Road were surveyed by Lancaster University Archaeology Unit (LUAU) during the Haweswater Survey in the 1990s. Where it was inspected and recorded along the High Street ridge it was noted to be in a poor state of preservation. The road in many places was only identified as a broad swathe of grass in outcropping bedrock, although in some areas erosion had exposed some of the gravel metaling. Only a few short lengths of raised agger were identified, this was due in part to degradation by medieval hollow ways, which reflect the considerable continued use of the road. It was also noted that the route of High Street Roman Road is in close proximity to a significant number of prehistoric monuments, which may suggest that it, or a more generalised route, may have been in use prior to the Romano-British period (LUAU 1997, 53 and 57).
- 3.3.6 A further field survey and desk-based assessment were undertaken to determine the impact of installing a water pipeline in 2002. The assessment indicated that each of two sections of pipeline, one between Bankwood and Raisbeck across the Eden Valley and the other between Pooley Bridge and Shap, ran across areas of high archaeological potential, which contained monuments dating from the Neolithic period to the present, including a number of Scheduled Monuments (Clark 2005). The information from these surveys has been incorporated into the HER (as noted above).
- 3.3.7 In 2006 an archaeological investigation was undertaken during repairs to the footpath between Froswick and Thornthwaite Crag. This part of the Kentmere Horseshoe follows the line of the High Street Roman Road at the south end near Troutbeck. The road was identified as a bank cut into the hillside to form a level terrace. Three trenches were excavated, and the road surface was identified in all the trenches, although it was eroded and built largely of gravels and pebbles. In each trench there were also features designed to keep water and peat from encroaching onto the road. In one trench this took the form of a large gravel-filled ditch, and in the other two a large bank built of clay and gravel. It was determined that road was not what is considered typical of a Roman road, but it had similarities with some other roads of Roman date, including Haverfield's description of the High Street north of Loadpot Hill (Haverfield 1898, 362). Although no finds were recovered to date the

road, the level of engineering and design suggested it was Roman (Greenlane Archaeology 2006).

- 3.3.8 More recently the route of the Roman Road has been researched by the Roman Roads Research Association using LiDAR and modern aerial imagery (RRRA 2022). There are traces of a road leading out of the Roman fort's east gate at Brougham, but no earthworks survive beyond this point until open fell is reached south of Winder Hall, where there is a visible track leading to the Cockpit stone circle. Only a meandering track is visible on aerial imagery over Wether Hill and Loadpot Hill.
- 3.3.9 A further inspection of LiDAR data has identified the route as an earthwork between the Cockpit and Loadpot Hill (see Figure 6). LiDAR shows a well-defined track, but in places more than one route is visible, possibly due to later use of the road which had led to the erosion of the route (Figure 7a). It is also evident that the scheduled area of the High Street Roman Road does not exactly follow the earthworks visible on the LiDAR data. In places the route appears as a sunken feature, particularly where it cuts across a slope, but to the west and south of Loadpot Hill it is indistinct (Figure 7b). Here the meandering route of a possible packhorse trail can be seen crossing the south side of Loadpot hill, aligned northwest to southeast, before crossing the recorded route of High Street Roman Road and turning northeast to follow an existing footpath. This feature has also been recorded by Historic England during their recent survey and was confirmed on the ground by project volunteers.
- 3.3.10 The area of Wether Hill within Bampton Common is only partially covered by freely available LiDAR data. However, it is possible to note the route of the existing trackways as a linear feature running due southwards through an area of peat, where peat cutting may have taken place in the past (Figure 7c). The route over the top of Wether Hill to the south is not covered by the LiDAR data. Numerous drainage channels are visible on the LiDAR plot to the west of the route, and further ditches/drainage features have been mapped by the current Historic England survey to the east side of the route.

4 Topographic Survey

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The topographic surveys took place between 8th and 14th August 2022 following a walkover survey of the study area by project volunteers. The study area was inspected for any visible evidence for features of archaeological/historic interest and the recorded route of High Street Roman Road was assessed to determine if there was any visible evidence for buried archaeological remains.

4.1.2 Identified sites were recorded using a standard site record form supplied by the Lake District National Park Authority. Recorded details were used to compile the site gazetteer (see Appendix 1). Following the walkover survey, three areas were selected for topographic survey (see Figure 7c and Figure 8).

4.2 Study Area

4.2.1 The route of High Street Roman Road is recorded to cross the southern slope of Loadpot Hill on the north side of the study area, aligned northwest to southeast, whereas the modern footpath runs almost due south parallel with the boundary of Bampton Common (see Figure 8 and Plate 5). The footpath splits into two at several locations, probably due to the presence of visible footpath erosion.



Plate 5: Loadpot Hill showing modern footpaths, looking northwest. The route of High Street Roman Road may possibly be represented by step in the slope (route indicated by red arrow)

4.2.2 The route of the High Street Roman Road is not visible as an earthwork at this location, but from Wether Hill to the south a step in the slope may mark the location of the route (Plate 5). Several natural breaks or steps in the slope were noted to be present on the south side of Loadpot Hill where

the vegetation was lower on the route of the modern footpath (Plate 6). An earthwork bank [1] was also noted to cross the modern footpath to the south of the recorded route of High Street (Plate 7).



Plate 6: Modern path south of Loadpot Hill showing possible steps in the slope, looking northeast (indicated by red arrow)



Plate 7: Earthwork bank [1] crossing the modern path south of Loadpot Hill, looking north

4.2.3 Topographic survey was undertaken over an area measuring 50m by 50m to record the earthwork bank [1] to the south of Loadpot Hill (Area A). This area was located to the south of the scheduled area and was immediately to the west of the boundary of Bampton Common (Figure 8). A second

area measuring 50m by 30m was surveyed to record the possible steps on the southern slope of Loadpot Hill (Area B). This area included a portion of the scheduled area and was within the common immediately to the south of the ruin of Lowther House [10] and a boundary stone [11] marking the boundary of Bampton Common (see Appendix 1).



Plate 8: Wether Hill from Loadpot Hill showing the possible route of High Street Roman Road as a cutting in the peat, looking southeast (route indicated by red arrow)



Plate 9: Straight section of the route on Wether Hill defined by a hollow way, looking south

- 4.2.4 No other earthworks associated with High Street Roman Road were identified between Loadpot Hill and Wether Hill, the route apparently passing through an area of deep peat where peat cutting may have taken place historically. However, from Loadpot Hill a cutting in the peat could be seen which may mark the location of the route where it traverses the northern slope of Wether Hill (Plate 8).
- 4.2.5 The route of High Street Roman Road was identified as a straight section of hollow way on the summit of Wether Hill (Plate 9). From here a modern footpath followed the scheduled route of High Street Roman Road down the southern slope of Wether Hill to Red Crag outside of the study area.
- 4.2.6 Topographic survey was undertaken over an area measuring 100m by 30m to record the earthworks and to better define the hollow way identified on Wether Hill (Area C). This area was located immediately to the east of the summit marked by another boundary stone [13] (see Appendix 1).

4.3 Area A

- 4.3.1 Area A occupied a slight south-facing slope on to the south of Loadpot Hill to the south of the scheduled area associated with High Street Roman Road and encompassed the most prominent earthwork recorded in this area during the initial walkover survey (Plate 7 and Figure 9).
- 4.3.2 The earthwork crossed one of the modern paths between Loadpot Hill and Wether Hill, aligned northwest to southeast, and comprised a discontinuous linear bank [1] 20m long, between 1.5m and 4m wide, and up to 0.4m high with a rounded east end and an indistinct west end. To the east was a separate mound [2] measuring approximately 6m in diameter at the base and 0.6m high.
- 4.3.3 The bank appeared to contain gravel which was visible at the surface where it was eroded by the footpath. The date and purpose of the earthwork was uncertain, but it was determined it was unlikely to be associated with the High Street Roman Road and it was not investigated any further.

4.4 Area B

- 4.4.1 Area B occupied a portion of the slope to the south of Loadpot Hill immediately to the east of the scheduled area associated with High Street Roman Road where it crossed the modern paths between Loadpot Hill and Wether Hill (Plate 6 and Figure 10). The survey was undertaken to attempt to record the topography and identify the possible location of the road which was not visible as an earthwork.
- 4.4.2 Two shallow steps in the slope were recorded immediately to the northeast of the scheduled area, both of which measured approximately 8m wide and c.0.3m deep. To the south of these was a relatively level area measuring c.35m wide where the modern footpath split into two (Figure 10).
- 4.4.3 No earthworks were identified in this area which could confidently be ascribed to High Street Roman Road and it was determined that the steps in the slope were most likely natural features, as these were aligned with the slope rather than the recorded route of the High Street Roman Road.

4.4.4 A geophysical survey was undertaken of this area in order to attempt to record any subsurface remains associated with the High Street Roman Road where it crossed the modern path (Area 2). The results of the geophysical survey are presented in Section 3 below.

4.5 Area C

4.5.1 Area C occupied an area on the summit of Wether Hill where a straight section of High Street Roman Road was identified, which appeared to be defined by a hollow way (Plate 9 and Figure 11). This area lay directly within the scheduled area of High Street where it crossed the summit of Wether Hill.

4.5.2 One of the modern paths followed the route of High Street Roman Road at this location, which was aligned approximately northeast to southwest, and was defined on the east side by an earthwork bank [3]. The bank measured c.65m long, 0.4m wide and 0.4m high. The bank top was level with the surface of the ground to the east over much of its length but was slightly higher to the north end.

4.5.3 At the south end of the bank the route appeared to take the form of a sunken hollow way [4], 14m long and 7m wide, before flattening out to the south and becoming indistinct. This appeared to coincide with the natural break of slope, the route apparently cutting the summit of Wether Hill.



Plate 10: A section of path on Wether Hill with stone visible at the surface, looking north

4.5.4 On the north side of the summit the modern path continued in a straight line, and a possible stone surface could be seen to be eroding out of the turf (Plate 10). A further sunken hollow way [5] was noted to continue in a northeast direction down the slope for a distance of c.30m. This measured 4.2m wide and was up to 0.6m deep but was difficult to photograph due to the vegetation growth (Plate 11). Further to the south this feature became indistinct and was lost in an area of deep peat.

- 4.5.5 This hollow way appeared to branch off to the west for a distance of 6m towards the modern path but did not cross onto the modern route. Approximately 5m to the west a sub-circular mound [6] was identified which may possibly have been associated with the hollow way. This measured c.4m in diameter and was up to 0.3m high with a flat top and straight sides. Its purpose was uncertain.



Plate 11: Hollow way on the north side of Wether Hill, looking north

- 4.5.6 To the west of the modern path and bank [3] a slight linear embankment was identified [7]. This ran parallel with the modern path for a distance of 15m and was 5.8m wide and up to 0.2m high. This feature was indistinct to the north and south and its continuation beyond this location was uncertain.
- 4.5.7 The recorded earthworks appeared to represent a palimpsest of features, possibly including an embankment [7], a straight section of High Street Roman Road defined by a linear bank [3], and at least one hollow way [5], which appears to divert eastwards on the north side of Wether Hill. These features were further investigated using geophysical survey (Area 1) and excavation (Trench 1).

5 Geophysical Survey

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 The geophysical survey was undertaken between the 11th and 14th August 2022. Earth Resistance survey was undertaken over two areas (Area 1 and Area 2) covering two portions of the High Street Roman Road where topographic surveys had previously been undertaken (Area B and Area C).
- 5.1.2 The surveys were hindered by deep vegetation in places and therefore the surveys focused on the shorter vegetation associated with modern footpaths following High Street Roman Road (Figure 8).

5.2 Area 1

- 5.2.1 Area 1 was located on the summit of Wether Hill, where a straight section of High Street Roman Road was identified and appeared to be represented by an embankment, hollow way and a linear bank (Area C). The Area 1 survey included a 120m long section of the scheduled area (Figure 12).
- 5.2.2 Several broad discrete areas of high and low resistance were detected in Area 1 which were likely due to the underlying geology being nearer the surface and some deeper areas of peat (Figure 13).
- 5.2.3 Two linear low resistance anomalies were detected, aligned north-northeast to south-southwest, which were interpreted as possible soil-filled ditches. On the south side of Area 1 these ran parallel to each other being c.8m apart. These continued outside of the survey area to the south. The features became more widely spaced to the north where they were 22m apart at their widest point.
- 5.2.4 The eastern anomaly diverted eastwards slightly on the north side of Area 1 and continued outside of the survey area, but the western anomaly became indistinct to the north. An area of slightly higher resistance was detected between these features on the south side of the survey area suggesting that the linear anomalies may represent two ditches flanking a road surface. However, the divergence to the north may indicate the presence of two routes running down the northern slope of Wether Hill.
- 5.2.5 The geophysical anomalies were found to closely correspond to the topographic survey, the easternmost low resistance anomaly following the course of the recorded hollow way, whilst the western low resistance anomaly appeared to align with the recorded embankment (Figure 14). A trench was placed across this area to sample the features detected by the geophysical survey.

5.3 Area 2

- 5.3.1 Area 2 was located to the south of Loadpot Hill in order to attempt to identify any subsurface features associated with High Street Roman Road where it crossed the modern paths (Area B). This included the area of the topographic survey (Area B) and part of the scheduled area (Figure 15).

- 5.3.2 High resistance was recorded along the northwest side of Area 2 where the vegetation was visibly eroded, exposing the underlying geology. Several discrete areas of high and low resistance were also detected in Area 2 which were likely associated with the underlying geology being nearer the surface and some areas of deeper peat (Figure 16). These closely corresponded to the topographic survey.
- 5.3.3 A broad area of low resistance was detected which corresponded to the alignment of the High Street Roman Road, although the nature of the anomaly was uncertain. A trench was therefore placed across this area to determine the presence/absence of a ditch to the east side of the scheduled area.

6 Archaeological Excavation

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 The archaeological excavation was undertaken between the 15th and 21st August 2022, with two trenches (Trench 1 and Trench 2) excavated to test the results of the topographic and geophysical surveys (Figure 8). Trench 1 was located within the scheduled area on the summit of Wether Hill to target earthworks believed to be associated with High Street Roman Road, and to sample the geophysical anomalies detected (Figure 14). Trench 2 was located to the south of Loadpot Hill to determine the possible presence of a feature to the east side of the scheduled area (Figure 17).
- 6.1.2 The natural yellow boulder clay (**105**) was revealed in both trenches, being exposed at a depth of 0.25m below ground level (blg) in Trench 1, and between 0.18m and 0.3m blg in Trench 2. In Trench 1 the pebble geology (**104**) was also exposed at a depth of 0.18m blg in the east end of the trench.
- 6.1.3 Archaeological features were identified in Trench 1 cutting into the natural geology, which appeared to be associated with a former trackway (Plate 12). These features closely corresponded to the identified earthworks and geophysical anomalies, being covered by 0.12m of peat and turf (**100**).
- 6.1.4 The natural yellow boulder clay was overlain in Trench 2 by a 0.08m-deep layer of grey silty clay (**201**) containing frequent pebbles and quartz fragments, above which was between 0.15m and 0.2m of peat and turf (**200**). No archaeological features were identified in Trench 2, although a slightly deeper soil was identified in the east end which corresponded with the geophysical anomaly (Plate 13).
- 6.1.5 The following text discusses the archaeological features encountered in more detail.



Plate 12: Trench 1 at Wether Hill following excavation, looking southeast



Plate 13: Trench 2 south of Loadpot Hill following excavation, looking southeast

6.2 Results

- 6.2.1 Trench 1 was placed on the summit of Wether Hill where the recorded elevation was 653m above Ordnance Datum (aOD). The trench was 10m long and 1.5m wide, aligned approximately northwest to southeast, bisecting one of the modern paths across Wether Hill, as well as earthworks identified during the topographic survey (Figure 14). The trench encompassed a linear bank in the east end and a possible low embankment in the western portion of the trench, and two geophysical anomalies.
- 6.2.2 The natural substrate, comprising yellow boulder clay **(105)** and a deposit of tightly packed cobbles **(104)**, was identified at a depth of 0.2m blg in the east end of Trench 2 at the bottom of the bank (Figure 18). The natural clay and cobbles appeared to have been cut into at the east side of the trench, where a shallow gully or ditch **[106]** was identified. This measured 0.8m wide and 0.08m deep with slightly rounded sides and a flat base. The gully was aligned with the adjacent bank, which extended to the northeast to southwest along the east side of the modern footpath (Plates 14 & 15).
- 6.2.3 The gully **[106]** was filled with a 0.11m deep 1.3m wide deposit of dark brown clayey silt **(103)**, which expended to the west partially covering the cobbles **(104)**, indicating that this deposit had developed after the gully had silted up. This deposit and the bank were covered by 0.12m of peat and turf **(100)**.
- 6.2.4 The bank appeared to have been constructed in part using upcast material from this gully and comprised a randomly placed 0.15m deep deposit of cobbles **(107)** measuring up to 0.15m by 0.10m by 0.05m, overlain by a loose deposit of mid-brown clayey sand and gravel **(102)**, containing occasional cobbles. The top of the bank extended eastwards outside the trench (Plates 14 & 15).



Plate 14: Bank and gully in the east end of Trench 1 prior to excavation, looking east



Plate 15: Excavated features in the east end of Trench 1, looking south

- 6.2.5 A 6.3m wide deposit of compacted grey silty clay with gravel **(109)** was revealed in the western portion of the trench and was noted to extend outside of the trench to the west. This contained frequent pebbles and some larger cobbles up to 0.3m by 0.2m by 0.1m which were randomly distributed throughout the deposit (Plate 16). The deposit was 0.1m higher on west side of the trench. This area measured 2.6m wide giving the appearance of a slightly embanked area (Figure 18).
- 6.2.6 The east side of this area was cut by another shallow gully or ditch **[108]** which was 0.9m wide and 0.15m deep with rounded sides and base. The gully was filled with 0.15m of mid-brown clayey sand

(101) containing fine gravel and occasional cobbles measuring up to 0.2m by 0.2m by 0.05m. These deposits were also covered in 0.12m of peat and turf (100).



Plate 16: Embanked deposit (109) in the west end of Trench 1, looking east

6.2.7 Although no archaeological features were revealed in Trench 2, a deposit of grey silty clay (201) containing frequent pebbles was identified beneath the peat (200), which was similar in appearance to deposit (109) in Trench 1. This appears to be a natural subsoil directly overlying the boulder clay (200). The deeper peat in the east end of Trench 1 seems to be due to the presence of the trackway which has inhibited vegetation growth and peat development in the west end of Trench 2 (Plate 13).

6.3 Discussion

6.3.1 Archaeological features were identified in Trench 1, comprising two shallow features [106] and [108] both of which appear to have been cut for drainage purposes. These features were associated with a linear bank (102)/(107), which was aligned with the recorded route of High Street Roman Road, and an embankment (109) to the west. The excavated features aligned with the visible earthworks, which included a deep hollow way which cut down the slope to the northeast of Trench 1.

6.3.2 No constructed road surface was revealed by the work but the presence of a trackway was indicated in Trench 1, with a shallow gully [108] to the east side which may have been cut for drainage purposes. The bank and gully [106] to the east may be associated with a later phase of activity, based on the deposits encountered. However, no evidence was recovered with which to date the features.

7 Conclusions

7.1 High Street Roman Road

- 7.1.1 The High Street Roman Road (Margary 74) is believed to run from Brougham Roman Fort (*Brocavum*) near Penrith, over the Lake District Fells to Ambleside Roman Fort (*Galava*). The High Street Roman Road appears to have been known and written about from at least the medieval period onwards and antiquarians have long speculated about the presence of the Roman road, including Cornelius Nicholson who recorded in *The Annals of Kendal* (1861) that he 'laid bare the Roman pavement in two or three places'. However, it is unknown whether the High Street was created by the Romans, or whether a pre-existing mountain track was adapted by the Romans to serve as the road.
- 7.1.2 The form and route of High Street Roman Road where it crosses Bampton Common has been the cause of much speculation. Excavations in the 19th century by Dr. G. B. Grundy and Mr. W. H. Parkin to the north of Loadpot Hill revealed a straight embankment, measuring c.3m wide at top and 4.5-4.9m wide at base. When trenched, it was found to consist of four layers, with turf overlying a layer of angular gravel, a layer of peat and a layer of larger stones, the road layers being up to 1m deep. However, 2006 excavations by Greenlane Archaeology between Froswick and Thornthwaite Crag to the south revealed the presence of a graveled surface only and features associated with the prevention of flooding, or to stop the encroachment of peat onto the road surface. Recent studies by Historic England and others have failed to identify earthworks associated with the Roman road.
- 7.1.3 The current project has revealed the presence of earthworks on Wether Hill which may be associated with High Street Roman Road, including an embankment measuring 2.6m wide at the top, and a linear bank to the east. The geophysical survey of the same area suggested the possible presence of two routes on Wether Hill, one of which takes the form of a hollow way where it crosses the summit. No evidence for the High Street was identified to the north of Wether Hill or on the southern slopes of Loadpot Hill where the recorded route of High Street Roman Road traverses an area of deep peat.
- 7.1.4 Excavation of a 10m-long trench on Wether Hill has revealed the presence of a shallow drainage ditch or gully associated with the recorded embankment, and a further gully and bank to the east which appear to be associated with the hollow way. No dating evidence was recovered to confirm the period of use. However, the excavated evidence suggests that a trackway across Wether Hill may have been represented by the embankment, which was later replaced by the identified hollow way.
- 7.1.5 The presence of the hollow way compares with the 2006 excavations to the south, in that the excavation of the easternmost drainage ditch and creation of a bank, seems to have been an attempt to keep water from encroaching onto the road surface. The original route may also have been eroded by use in later periods, however there was no evidence for the presence of a 'classic' Roman road.

1.2 Archaeological potential

- 1.2.1 The topographic survey, geophysical survey and excavation on Wether Hill recorded the presence of an embanked trackway and a hollow way with associated drainage features. It is likely that similar features are preserved beneath the peat in other areas on the route of the High Street Roman Road. Further excavations of full sections across the High Street Roman Road would be required to confirm the exact location and makeup of the road, which may well have varied over the course of the route.
- 1.2.2 The initial walkover survey has also confirmed the presence of earthworks recorded by Historic England as ditches between Loadpot Hill and Wether Hill, which were interpreted as probable medieval pack horse trails. Post-medieval features have also been identified during the desk-based assessment and walkover survey, including the remains of a stone platform and walls at Sandford Stake/Lowther House and two boundary stones/markers on the western edge of Bampton Common.
- 7.1.6 An earthwork of unknown purpose was recorded by the topographic survey to the south of Loadpot Hill (in Area C). Excavation would be required to determine the date and form of the earthwork.
- 7.1.7 A site visit undertaken to identify an undated enclosure at Wether Hill (HER 31194) but the site could not be located. It is believed the site may be a natural feature which has been misinterpreted. It is recommended that the Lake District Historic Environment Record is updated with this information.

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APPENDIX 1: Gazetteer


Site Number	Survey Area	Grid Reference	Site Name	Monument Type	Period	Condition
1	A	NY 4565 1761	Bank south of Loadpot Hill	Bank (Earthwork)	Uncertain	B
Site Description	The earthwork bank crossed one of the modern paths between Loadpot Hill and Wether Hill, aligned northwest to southeast, and comprised a discontinuous linear bank 20m long, between 1.5m and 4m wide, and up to 0.4m high with a rounded east end and an indistinct west end. The date and purpose of the bank was unknown.					
Comments	The bank appeared stable but was being eroded at the surface by foot traffic on the footpath exposing gravel within the bank. No specific management recommendations.					
Photo Nos 1, 3						
Caption	Earthwork bank [1] crossing the modern path south of Loadpot Hill, looking north (1m scale)					
2	A	NY 4567 1761	Mound south of Loadpot Hill	Mound (Earthwork)	Uncertain	A
Site Number	Survey Area	Grid Reference	Site Name	Monument Type	Period	Condition
Site Description	Earthwork mound measuring approximately 6m in diameter at the base and 0.6m high located immediately to the east of an earth bank [1]. The date and purpose of the mound and bank was unknown.					
Comments	Located in an area of rough grazing. No obvious threats. No management recommendations.					
Photo Nos 1, 2						
Caption	Earthwork mound [2] to the east end of bank [1] south of Loadpot Hill, looking northeast (1m scale)					

Site Number	Survey Area	Grid Reference	Site Name	Monument Type	Period	Condition
3	C	NY 4558 1672	Bank on summit of Wether Hill	Bank (Earthwork)	Uncertain	A
Site Description	Earthwork bank c.65m long, 0.4m wide and 0.4m high but level with the ground surface to the east over much of its length being slightly higher to the north end. Bank follows the east side of a modern footpath across Wether Hill on the course of the High Street Roman Road, where it takes the form of a hollow way.					
Comments	Located in an area of rough grazing. No obvious threats. No management recommendations.					
Photo Nos 12, 13, 14						
Caption	Earthwork bank [3] bounding the east side of High Street on Wether Hill, looking south					
Site Number	Survey Area	Grid Reference	Site Name	Monument Type	Period	Condition
4	C	NY 4556 1669	Hollow way on Wether Hill	Hollow Way	Medieval	B
Site Description	A sunken section of High Street Roman Road on Wether Hill measuring 70m long, taking the form of a 7m wide 15m long hollow way [4] on the south side of the summit. Defined by a bank [3] to the north for a further 55m.					
Comments	Some erosion by foot traffic exposing stone at the surface and eroded/waterlogged in one location. Surface repair recommended where eroded by visitors.					
Photo Nos 15, 16						
Caption	Hollow way [4] crossing the summit of Wether Hill, looking south (1m scale)					

Site Number	Survey Area	Grid Reference	Site Name	Monument Type	Period	Condition
5	C	NY 4560 1676	Hollow Way north of Wether Hill	Hollow Way	Medieval	A
Site Description	A sunken hollow way aligned northeast to southwest to the north of the summit of Wether Hill runs for c.30m down the slope. This measured 4.2m wide and was up to 0.6m deep but further to the south the feature was indistinct and became lost in an area of deep peat. This hollow way appeared to branch off to the west for a distance of 6m towards the modern path but did not cross onto it. A mound [6] was located at the west end.					
Comments	Located in an area of rough grazing. No obvious threats. No management recommendations.					
Photo Nos 18,19,20						
Caption	Hollow way on the north side of Wether Hill, looking north (1m scale)					
Site Number	Survey Area	Grid Reference	Site Name	Monument Type	Period	Condition
6	C	NY 4559 1676	Mound on Wether Hill	Mound (Earthwork)	Uncertain	A
Site Description	Earthwork mound [6] measuring approximately 4m in diameter and up to 0.3m high with a flat top and straight sides located 5m to the west of the hollow way [5] on Wether Hill. Its purpose was uncertain.					
Comments	Located in an area of rough grazing. No obvious threats. No management recommendations.					
Photo Nos	None					
Caption	No photograph was taken due to high vegetation					
Site Number	Survey Area	Grid Reference	Site Name	Monument Type	Period	Condition
7	C	NY 4557 1672	Embankment on Wether Hill	Embankment	Roman (?)	A
Site Description	A linear embankment [7] was identified to the west of the modern path on the route of High Street Roman Road. The embankment was 15m long and 5.8m wide and up to 0.2m high. This feature was indistinct to the north and south and its continuation beyond this location was uncertain.					
Comments	Located in an area of rough grazing. No obvious threats. No management recommendations.					
Photo Nos	None					
Caption	No photograph was taken due to high vegetation					

Site Number	Survey Area	Grid Reference	Site Name	Monument Type	Period	Condition
8	N/A	NY 4568 1779 NY 4563 1771	Hollow Way south of Loadpot Hill	Packhorse Road	Medieval	A
Site Description	A sinuous hollow way is recorded on Historic England aerial imagery to the south of Loadpot Hill, aligned approximately northwest to southeast, which joins up with a bridleway running east to Keldhead. The route takes the form of a c.1km long 2.5m wide c.0.4m deep hollow way with several branches along its length.					
Comments	Crosses an area of rough grazing. No obvious threats. No management recommendations.					
Photo Nos 8, 9						
Caption	Hollow way [8] crossing the slope to the south of Loadpot Hill, looking northwest (1m scale)					
9	N/A	NY 4578 1779 NY 4583 1779	Mound south of Loadpot Hill	Mound (Earthwork)	Uncertain	A
Site Number	Survey Area	Grid Reference	Site Name	Monument Type	Period	Condition
Site Description	A section of hollow way is recorded on Historic England aerial imagery to the southeast of Loadpot Hill, aligned approximately east west. The holloway is 4m wide c.1m deep running down the slope for at least c.85m					
Comments	Located in an area of rough grazing. No obvious threats. No management recommendations.					
Photo Nos 4						
Caption	Hollow way [9] to the southeast of Loadpot Hill, looking east (1m scale)					

Site Number	Survey Area	Grid Reference	Site Name	Monument Type	Period	Condition
10	N/A	NY 4574 1783	Sandford Stake/ Lowther House	Building	Post-medieval/ Modern	C
Site Description	Rectangular stone platform of former building of three phases, the earliest measuring 8.9m by 6.3m. The latest phase has upstanding walls surviving over an area of 2.0m by 2.7m with a 1m wide entrance to the north and a paved area to the north and east. The presence of concrete and tile indicates the latest phase is likely modern.					
Comments	Located on High Street Roman Road the ruin has been adapted as a crude shelter and is regularly used by walkers. Generally stable but at risk of further damage from visitor erosion.					
Photo Nos 5, 6, 7						
Caption	Remains of Lowther House [10] adapted as a modern shelter, looking south (1m scale)					
Site Number	Survey Area	Grid Reference	Site Name	Monument Type	Period	Condition
11	N/A	NY 4572 1782	Boundary Stone on Loadpot Hill	Boundary Marker	Post-medieval	A
Site Description	Upright stone [11] marking the boundary of Bampton Common on the south side of Loadpot Hill. Stone is roughly rectangular, being 0.88m high, 0.24m wide and 0.17m thick set into a crude platform of stone slabs.					
Comments	Located to the west of the modern footpath. No obvious threats. No management recommendations.					
Photo Nos 10						
Caption	Boundary marker [11] to the south of Loadpot Hill, looking north (1m scale)					

Site Number	Survey Area	Grid Reference	Site Name	Monument Type	Period	Condition
12	N/A	NY 4556 1678	Boundary Stone on Wether Hill	Boundary Marker	Post-medieval	A
Site Description	Upright stone [120] marking the boundary of Bampton Common on the summit of Wether Hill. Stone is roughly shaped, being 0.6m high, 0.20m wide and 0.18m thick set into a crude platform of stone slabs.					
Comments	Located on the course of High Street the stone has been used as the focus for a small walker's cairn with some erosion evident around the base. However, the boundary marker is stable and not currently at risk.					
Photo Nos 18,19,20						
Caption	Boundary marker [12] on Wether Hill, looking west (1m scale)					